

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 09805

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO

SUBJECT: ANTUNES VISIT TO LONDON JUNE 27

1. FCO OFFICIAL (RICHARD BAKER, HEAD OF SOUTHWEST EUROPEAN OFFICE) TOLD EMBOFF JUNE 25 THAT PORTUGUESE FONMIN ANTUNES WILL PAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO LONDON JUNE 27. ANTUNES WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE OR FOUR STAFF OFFICERS. HE WILL HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH FONSEC CALLAGHAN AND PRIME MINISTER WILSON. THERE WILL ALSO BE AN OFFICIAL DINNER FRIDAY EVENING.

2. ANTUNES WILL REMAIN IN LONDON SATURDAY, JUNE 28, ON PRIVATE BASIS "MOSTLY FOR SHOPPING."

3. FCO EXPECTS TO HOLD PRESS BRIEFING FOLLOWING OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS AND OPPORTUNITY MAY BE OFFERED ANTUNES FOR PRESS CONFERENCE OR MEDIA INTERVIEWS. IT IS UNLIKELY, BAKER SAID, THAT FORMAL COMMUNIQUE WILL BE ISSUED ON OCCASION OF THE VISIT SINCE HMG DOES NOT EXPECT VISIT WILL

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INCLUDE MUCH SUBSTANCE.

4. HOWEVER, FCO DOES FEEL VISIT IS IMPORTANT. FCO HAS BEEN TRYING TO ARRANGE HIGH-LEVEL PORTUGUESE VISIT TO LONDON, BUT RECENTLY CONCLUDED REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN PRE-EMPTED FONSEC'S SCHEDULE. ON THEIR SIDE, PORTUGUESE OPTED FOR SHORT VISIT NOW, RATHER THAN MORE EXTENDED VISIT PROPOSED IN JULY PROBABLY, ACCORDING FCO, BECAUSE OF INTERESTS IN PERSONAL MEETING WITH CALLAGHAN BEFORE NEXT EEC AND NATO MEETINGS. (ANTUNES WAS NOT PRESENT DURING NATO SUMMIT.)

5. FCO SEES ANTUNES AS SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN POLITICAL CONFIGURATION IN LISBON. IN FCO VIEW, ANTUNES IS VOICE OF MODERATE FORCES AND THEY INTEND TO SO PUBLICIZE HIS VISIT WITH VIEW OF STRENGTHENING INFLUENCE OF MODERATES IN PORTUGAL. FCO HAS PROMISED RUNDOWN ON VISIT NEXT WEEK.

RICHARDSON

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